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DEPT FOR NEA/I, PM (PLEASE PASS TO COSTNER, DIAZ, MORIMOTO)
DEPT ALSO FOR NCTC

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/06/2025
TAGS: [IZ](#) [PARM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [MASS](#) [MARR](#)
SUBJECT: IRAQ AGREES TO MANPADS REDUCTION PROGRAM

REF: 09 STATE 0487

Classified By: Pol-Mil Minister Counselor Cameron Munter, reasons 1.4 b
-d

[1](#)1. (U) This cable contains an action request (see paragraph 5).

[1](#)2. (S//NF) The Government of Iraq (GOI) officially supports a plan to adopt a host-country led MANPADS reduction program (subsequently "MANPADS program", reftel). National Security Council Director General Khamza Sharif Hasan told Pol-Miloff February 2 that the Prime Minister agreed to support the proposed MANPADS program, although the PM's office would need to review the details in a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Sharif assured again that the U.S. involvement would remain secret, and also signaled that the PM's office would embed the MANPADS program in a broader GOI effort to capture dangerous ordnance and weapons that could be exploited by terrorists. With the PM's support, the key issues that remain to be resolved are operational and technical.

Achieving GOI's Support

[1](#)3. (S//NF) This breakthrough in GOI's consent follows two months of Post's direct lobbying and months of prior planning and engagement. Pol-Mil MinCouns conferred with PM/WRA and selected NSA Director Safa Al Sheik as the best interlocutor and then began raising the issue of a MANPADS abatement program December 14. Pol-Mil MinCouns subsequently engaged Office of Commander in Chief (OCINC) Director Gen. Farouk Al-Araji and delivered the non-paper (reftel) to Al Sheik detailing a host country-led MANPADS reduction program on January 6. Pol-Miloff further discussed the parameters and possibilities of the proposed program with Al Sheik's deputy, Sharif, throughout January. Sharif presented options to the Prime Minister's office and received word that the GOI would support the MANPADS program January 31. COMMENT: As it now stands, the PM and NSA Office support the program that in practice must include the MOI, MOD, and the Provincial Councils, which have not been intimately involved yet; and the March 7 national elections will surely distract the major players and the national security infrastructure. END COMMENT.

Technical Considerations

[1](#)4. (S//NF) Sharif provided a number of key assurances to our stipulations: He agreed to keep the U.S. support for the MANPADS buyback secret and parenthetically emphasized that

this requirement would enhance the program's effectiveness. Sharif did not have an answer for what the central GOI managing office would be. He suggested using the term "GOI representative" in the draft MOU until the question was settled. Sharif predicted that the central GOI entity would be either a committee headed by the NSA, or the PM's office, led by OCINC or MOD. Sharif said that the GOI would not permit providing money to groups or members of groups on the list of U.S.-designated terrorist organizations, again reiterating that this requirement was also in Iraq's interest. Operationally, the program will decentralize significant operations to the level of Provincial Councils and Provincial Security Councils for greater effectiveness. Finally, Sharif clarified that the GOI would provide amnesty only for the transit and disclosure of MANPADS, not for crimes previously or subsequently committed.

Next Steps

15. (S//NF) Given the above considerations, Post requests that PM/WRA facilitates the drafting of a MOU as soon as possible. Preferably we would have a MOU draft to review internally by Q Preferably we would have a MOU draft to review internally by February 17 so that we can begin the process of reviewing drafts with Sharif on February 21. Post is aware that other obligations are competing for the legal team's time and will adjust as needed.

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